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Gov. Shumlin, Sec. Holcombe Announce Launch of Personalized Learning Plan Website Website key piece of Governor's 2013 education agenda; Shumlin pushes 2014 changes

MONTPELIER – Gov. Peter Shumlin, Education Secretary Rebecca Holcombe, educators and key lawmakers today announced the launch of the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) website, highlighting a critical piece of the Governor's education agenda from the last legislative session.

"Today's Personal Learning Plan launch is a critical step toward providing individual students with the specific path to graduation – and beyond – that best meets their learning styles," the Governor said. "There is no one-size-fits-all plan for teaching our children. These learning plans enable us to adjust education to meet the needs of all students, and ensure they have the skills they need to find good jobs after graduation."

"Through having a personalized learning plan, I was able to create an academic environment that interested and challenged me. I am engaged and inspired by learning again," said Abby Trombley, CVU student and PLP Work Group member. "Personalized learning plans will make this possible for all students."

The Governor and Secretary Holcombe thanked the 2013 Legislature for passing additional measures to strengthen education in Vermont:

- Free lunch for all low-income students
- Up to two free dual enrollment courses for high school juniors and seniors
- Expanded early college opportunities for all students
- Increased opportunities in high school for work-based and virtual learning, internships and career and technical education
- Expansion of Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)
- Increased appropriation for higher education to be used for financial aid to Vermont students

In addition, Gov. Shumlin urged the 2014 Legislature to take those improvements to the next level by passing:

- Creation of the Vermont Strong Scholars Program to repay a portion of postsecondary tuition debt for Vermont residents who graduate from a Vermont public or independent postsecondary institution with a degree in certain fields, and who work in Vermont after graduation in a field related to the degree.
- Statewide expansion of Pre-K programs to ensure Vermont's youngest arrive at school prepared to learn, and get a head start on a better education and quality of life.

The Personal Learning Plan website announced today was created by a workgroup to assist Vermont schools in implementation of the PLP process. The group met monthly from September 2013 to January 2014, and included nominees from partner organizations like the Vermont Principals

Association, Vermont Superintendents Association, Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, Vermont National Educators Association, University of Vermont and the Vermont State Colleges. The 24 members represented superintendents, principals, school counselors, classroom teachers, students, special educators and higher education. Member information is at: <http://bit.ly/1jOyn8v>.

“This is such an exciting step forward for our schools and students,” said Sec. Holcombe. “We can't address challenges around engagement, relevance and student responsibility for learning without taking on this issue of personalization.”

The next phase for the work group will be to reconvene in April and June 2014 to review the feedback submitted by 16 Vermont high schools who have received grants to vet the processes, tools and resources on the website, and develop additional ones based on their own school's process.

To view the PLP website, please visit: <http://education.vermont.gov/plp-working-group/main>.

For more information about the Personalized Learning Plans and Act 77, contact Debora Price at Debora.price@state.vt.us or (802) 828-0154.

Connect with the Vermont Agency of Education on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VTEducation>), Facebook (www.facebook.com/VTEducation), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/VTEducation).

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